The Rulings Of The Janazah



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In the name of Allah Most Beneficent Most Merciful
All praise is for Allah the Exalted and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger Muhammad and his family and companions and all those who follow them and their way until the Day of Resurrection

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah; we praise Allah and seek Allah's help and forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Allah, Most High, from the evils of our own selves. Whosoever has been guided by Allah, none can misguide him, and whosoever is misguided, no one can guide him except Allah.

And I bear witness that there is no god worthy of being worshipped except Allah Al Mighty, alone, without partner or associate. I further bear witness that Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) is his true worshipper and messenger, may Allah the exalted bestow His peace and blessings upon him.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah as Allah should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam." [Qur'an 3:102]

Everyone must die.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Everyone shall taste death. And only on the day of resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the fire and admitted to paradise, this person is indeed successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception:" (Qur'an 3:185)

"Every soul shall have the taste of death" [Qur'an 29:57]

The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "Remember the destroyer of pleasures - death, for not a day passes upon the grave except it says 'I am the house of remoteness; I am the house of loneliness; I am the house of soil; I am the house of worms' "(At-Tirmithi).

Remembering death discourages one from doing and evil and encourages him to do good.

Allah says in the Qur'an in Surah Luqman:

"Nor does anyone know what it is that he will earn tomorrow: Nor does anyone know in what land he is to die. Verily with Allah is full knowledge and Allah is acquainted with all things" (Qur'an 31:34).

The Muslims should differ from the Kufaar in how we live and the way we die and bury our dead. However, people listen to different non-Islamic traditions and see their ways of doing things, copy them and after time, these innovations becomes the norm. Funerals practices nowadays have been more attune with the culture of the land and people than the sunnah of the Prophet.

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) foretold this phenomenon in the hadith collected by both Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim:

"You will follow the same path as was those before you inch by inch and step by step so much so that if they had entered into the hole of a desert lizard you will enter too." They (The Prophet companions) asked him: "You mean Jews and Christians by your words' Those before you'?" He said: "Who else? (Other than those two religious groups)" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Aside from constantly reflecting upon the fact that we will inevitably die one day (perhaps even this day) we should also know how to properly give our fellow Muslims their rights when they die before us.

It is our goal in this essay to report the proper Islamic way of doing a funeral, to point out some of the innovations that have crept into the practices of some of the Muslims as well as remind us of the unavoidable journey we all must take into the hereafter.

WHEN A MUSLIM IS AT THE POINT OF DEATH

A dying person should have hope and positive thoughts about returning to Allah

"No one should die except that he has good expectations of Allah." [Muslim and others]

The dying person should return and fulfill all trusts and obligations or assign someone to fulfill them for him and he is unable to do so himself

The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever had oppresse his brother in his reputation or wealth, let him remedy that before the Day Of Judgment

comes. Because no *Dirham* or *Dinar* will be accepted then: if he has good deeds, they will be taken from him and given to his brother; and if he does not have good deeds, he will be burdened with his brother's sin. [Al-Al-Bukhari and others]

The dying person should have a will if necessary

It is necessary when one has debts, borrowed or entrusted items from others or if someone owes him one of the previous mentioned things to make sure trusts are return to their proper owners.

It is permitted to write a will concerning one third or less. Some of the scholars said it is preferable for it to be less than one-third, and the will does not apply to any of the heirs, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "There is no will for the heirs." (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, *al-Wasaayaa*, 2047; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, no. 1722).

Family members of the dying person and his most pious friends should be informed and should be present at his side to help him turn his thoughts to Allah, encourage him very gently to repent, remind him about all the good deeds that he did, about Allah's mercy, and Allah's forgiveness so that he may anticipate Allah's mercy and Allah's favors.

They should prompt him every now and then to say the Shahada

"Prompt your dying ones to say "La ilaha il lallah." Whoever has his last speech be "La ilaha il lallah" will enter paradise, regardless of what happens to prior to that. [Muslim and others]

AFTER DEATH

Closing the eyes of the deceased

Umm Salamah (May Allah be pleased with her) reported: Allah's messenger (Peace and Blessings be upon him) entered upon Abu Salamah [i.e., his dead body], whose eyes were wide open. The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) closed the lids and then said, 'When the ruh is taken out, the eyesight follows it.' [Muslim & Ahmed]

Making du'a for the deceased

'Pray for forgiveness for your brother and ask for him to be made steadfast, for now he is being questioned.'" (Narrated by Abu Dawood, *al-Janaa'iz*, 2804; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood*, 2758).

They should cover all his body completely with a clean sheet

A'isha reported that: "Muslims covered the body of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) when he died" (Al-Bukhari & Muslim).

Hastening to prepare the body for washing, shrouding and burial.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "Hasten with the burial of your dead" (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)

The Deceased Should Be Buried in the land of their death

Ibn Qudaamah said:

The deceased should not be moved from the land of his death to another land unless that is for a valid reason. This is the view of al-Awzaa'i and Ibn al-Mundhir…and because it is easier and it avoids any delay that may cause the corpse to start decaying before burial. But if there is a valid reason for doing so, then it is permissible.
***Al-Mughni*, 2/193-194**

The Standing Committee said concerning this issue:

The Sunnah at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the time of the Sahaabah was to bury the deceased in the graveyard of the land or city in which he died, and to bury the martyrs where they died. It is not proven in any hadeeth or report that any of the Sahaabah was moved to a place other than the graveyard of the land or city in which he died, or to another place nearby.

Because of that, the majority of fuqaha' said: it is not permissible to move the deceased before burial to a land other than the one in which he died, unless that is for a valid reason such as the fear that his grave may be violated if he is buried where he died, or that it may be mistreated, in which case he must be moved to a place where his grave will be safe.

For example, moving him to his homeland so that his family will feel better and will be able to visit his grave is permissible.

But in such cases that is subject to the condition that there is no fear that the corpse may start to decay because of the delay in burial, and that his sanctity will not be violated. If there is no need to move him and these conditions are not met, then it is not permissible to move him.

The Committee believes that every deceased person should be buried in the graveyard of the city in which he dies, and that they should not be moved to another city unless that is for a valid reason, in accordance with the Sunnah and the practice of the salaf or early generations of this ummah, so as to avoid transgressing the rules of sharee'ah, to bury the deceased quickly as encouraged in sharee'ah, to protect the deceased from the procedures that may be done to his body to prevent decay, and to avoid the extravagance of spending large amounts of money unnecessarily and for which there is no legitimate shar'i need, as well as protecting the rights of the heirs and saving this money so that it may be spent in the proper ways.

This is the fatwa signed by the Committee. May Allah send blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions. *Fataawa Islamiyyah*, 2/31, 32

There is **no** authentic proof for reciting Al-Fatiha over the deceased nor is there any authentic proof for reading Surah Yasin after the death of a Muslim or at the grave of the deceased. All the hadiths mentioning reciting Yasin are weak and if they were authentic then the understanding would be to read Yasin to dying Muslims on their deathbeds similar to the hadith that says "Prompt your dying ones to say "La ilaha il lallah." So likewise it is not from the sunnah to prompt the deceased to say La ilaha il lallah after his burial after he has died.

WASHING THE DEAD MUSLIM (AL-GHUSUL)

Two or three persons may be needed for the washing. They should are be trustworthy, religious and knowledgeable about how to perform the washing.

The reward

Abu Rafi reported that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "He who washes a Muslim and conceals what he sees (bad smell, appearance, etc.) Allah grants him forgiveness forty times. And he who digs for him (a grave) and buries him would be granted a reward similar to providing for him a dwelling until the Day of Resurrection. And he who shrouds him, Allah will clothe him on the Day of Resurrection from the silk garments of jannah. (Al-Bayhaqi and others)

How to wash the dead

First make sure the awrah of the deceased is completely covered with a large sheet. Then remove his/her clothing.

The first aspect of Ghusl is to perform the istinja. Slowly lift him forward so that any waste that is likely to be released from his body is released.

For washing, you may use a piece of cloth or gloves. Wash private parts and untie braids and plaits. It may again be braided in three braids and place behind the back.

Start with perform wudu on the deceased then wash the right side of body completely while positioning the body on the left side to insure the water reaches its intended places then wash the left side while positioning the body on its right side.

Then wash again with water mixed with grounded lotus leaves or soap if there is no grounded lotus leaves. Wash three times, but if the body needs more cleaning, continue washing five or seven times, **but in it must be odd numbers**.

In the last wash, the washer may use camphor, or some perfume with the water.

After that the body should be dried with clean towel**.**

(The One who washed the body) performing a ghusl after washing the deceased is mustahabb, but not obligatory.

This is the view of Ibn 'Abbaas, Ibn 'Umar, 'Aa'ishah, al-Hasan al-Basri, Ibraaheem al-Nakha'i, ash-Shaafa'i, Ahmad, Ishaaq, Abu Thawr, Ibn al-Mundhir and others, and it is also the view regarded as most correct by Ibn Qudaamah. ***See Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 3/318; al-Mughni, 1/134***

Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It is mustahabb for the one who washes the deceased to do ghusl, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever washes the dead, let him do ghusl, and whoever carries him, let him do wudoo'."

Only males should wash the male deceased. Only females should wash the female deceased.

For a married person, the spouse may perform the washing.

A'ishah said: "If we could go back and change anything, no one would have washed the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but his wives." (Narrated by Abu Dawood).

Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him) left instructions in his will that he should be washed by his wife Asmaa' bint Umays, and she did that.

Abu Moosa was washed by his wife Umm 'Abd-Allah.

It is also permissible for a man to wash his wife when she dies, according to the correct scholarly view, because it was narrated by Ibn al-Mundhir that 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him) washed Faatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) after she died. That was well known among the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and no one denounced him for that, thus there was consensus on

Washing the body of someone body is burn, cut or autopsy performed on it

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The one who has been crushed by a falling wall, burned or has drowned should be washed if possible. But if there is the fear that washing may cause the body to disintegrate, then water should be poured over them without touching them. If there is the fear that water may cause the body to disintegrate, then they should not be washed, but tayammum should be done for them if possible, as in the case of a living person who may be harmed by water. If it is not possible to wash the deceased because there is no water available, then tayammum should be done, and if it is possible to wash some parts and not others, then those parts that can be washed should be washed, and tayammum should be done for the rest, as is the case of the living. ***From al-Mughni. 2/209.***

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: How should ghusl be done for a person who died in an accident and his body is disfigured and some parts may have been cut off?

He replied: It is obligatory to wash him, just like anyone else, if that is possible. If it is not possible then tayammum should be done for him, because tayammum takes the place of washing with water when that is not possible. ***Majmoo' Fataawa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah, 13/123***

Shrouding the Body

The cloth (preferably white) used for wrapping the body should cover the whole body. Use three pieces of sheets for male and female. (Narrations saying that the Prophet was wrapped in seven and that his daughter was wrapped in five are weak) Do not use silk cloth for men. Add some perfume to the shroud. Tie the open cloth at the head and feet, with a piece of cloth (from the same shroud) in such a way that one can differentiate the head from the legs.

Mourning The Dead

The Believer should be patient upon calamities

"Seek Allah's help with patient perseverance and prayer. It is indeed hard except for those who are humble." (2:45)

"O you who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and prayer, for God is with those who patiently persevere." (2:153)

"Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives, and the fruits of your toil. But give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. Those who say, when afflicted with calamity, 'To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return.' They are those on whom descend blessings from their Lord, and mercy. They are the ones who receive guidance." (2:155-157)

The Hidad:

The mourning (Hidad) is only done my women and it is as follows:

First, she must remain in her house in which she was living when her husband died. She remains therein until her iddah (mourning period) comes to an end. This is four months and ten days. Unless she is pregnant, wherein her mourning period ends when she gives birth. Allah says in the Qur'an.

"For those who are pregnant, their waiting period is until they deliver" [at-Talaq 4]

She does not leave the house except due to necessity, such as visiting the hospital due to illness, buying what she is in need of from the market, such as food or other items, if she cannot find others to do these things for her.

Similarly, if the house is destroyed, she may leave it for another house. Finally, if she does not find anyone who she knows close to her and she fears for her safety, she may move due to that need.

Secondly, she may not wear any kind of attractive clothing, regardless of whether it be black, green or otherwise. The important aspect is that it is not beautiful or attractive. This is what the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) ordered.

Thirdly, she must not wear jewelry, gold, silver, diamonds, pearls or anything of that nature. This is regardless of whether it is bracelets, chains or rings. She may not wear anything of this nature until her mourning period is over.

Fourthly, she must refrain from using perfume. The only exception to this is when she cleanses herself after her period. In that case, there is no harm if she applies some kind of incense.

Fifthly, she should not apply kohl. She can neither use kohl nor anything similar to kohl which is a beautification for the face. As for using water and soap, (to wash the face) there is nothing wrong with that. But the kohl, which is a beautification of the eyes and other similar items that woman put on their faces, are not to be used.

The woman must adhere to these five points when her husband dies.

However, there are many other acts that the general masses have taken as a practice or have fabricated concerning a mourning woman.

For example, they say that she cannot talk to anyone, she may not talk on the phone, she can only take a shower once a week, she cannot walk barefoot in her house, she cannot go out under the light of the moon, and other superstitions that are simply false and there is no basis for any of these things.

She may walk barefoot or with shoes in her house. She may fulfill her needs in the house, such as cooking her food and the food of her guests. She may go out in the light of the moon on her roof of her house or in her garden. She may wash herself whenever she wishes. She may speak to anyone she wishes as long as it is not suspicious speech. She may shake hands with women and men to whom she is related. As for those men she is not related to, she may not shake their hands. She may also remove her head scarf if she is **not** in the presence of men to whom she is not related.

However, she should not use henna or saffron either on her clothing or in her coffee. This is because saffron is a kind of perfume and it is not allowed for her to perfume herself. She cannot be proposed to. One may indirectly make a statement of intent to her but a clear proposal is not allowed.

Crying

Crying over the death of a love one is allowed in Islam as long as it does not develop into wailing. (Wailing refers to excessive mourning in a loud voice)

It is prohibited is to express grief by wailing, shrieking, beating the chest and cheeks, tearing hair or clothes, breaking things or scratching faces or making statements of disbelief.

All of this is totally prohibited, and the deceased may feel pain by these actions as the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "The deceased is punished (suffers) when someone bewails over him" (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)

Some (of the scholars) have said that this punishment (referred to in the hadith above) is the anxiety and distress that the dead experiences due to the wailing. Other Scholars have said that the deceased is punished only if the deceased requested them to wail over him after his death.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "Two things in people are Kufr (Ignorance), one is to ridicule someone on his family genealogy, and the other is bewailing loudly for the dead" (Muslim)

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said: "He is not of us who beats his face, tears his clothes and bewails loudly when misfortune happens to him as was done before during the days of ignorance " (Al-Bukhari & Muslim).

There is no objection to weeping as Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) did when his son died and said:

"It is a mercy that Allah made in the hearts of his servants" (Al-Bukhari).

The Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) explained that in a hadeeth narrated by al-Al-Bukhari (7377) and Muslim (923) from Usaamah ibn Zayd, according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wept for the son of one of his daughters. Sa'd ibn 'Ubaadah said: "What is this, O' Messenger of Allah?" He said, "This is compassion which Allah puts in the hearts of His slaves. Allah shows mercy to those of His slaves who are merciful."

Imam An-Nawawi said: What this means is that Sa'd thought that all kinds of weeping were haraam, and that shedding tears was haraam. He thought that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had forgotten that, so he reminded him. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explained that simply weeping and shedding tears is neither haraam nor makrooh, rather it is compassion and is something good. What is haraam is wailing and lamenting, and weeping that is accompanied by one or both of these actions, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah does not punish for tears that are shed or for sorrow in the heart, rather He punishes or shows mercy because of this" – and he pointed to his tongue.

Ibn Taymiyah was asked – as it says in *al-Fataawa*, 24/380 – whether the weeping of a mother or brothers and sisters has any effect on the deceased. He said: "Rather there is no sin in tears shed by the eyes and sorrow in the heart, but lamenting and wailing are forbidden."

With regard to weeping for the deceased even after some time has passed, there is nothing wrong with that, as long as it is not accompanied by wailing, lamenting or feeling displeased with the will and decree of Allah.

Imam Muslim (976) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) visited the grave of his mother and wept, and those who were around him also wept. He said: "I asked my Lord for permission to pray for forgiveness for her, and He did not give me permission; and I asked Him for permission to visit her grave and He gave me permission. So visit the graves, for they will remind you of death."

Relatives of a deceased Muslim may mourn him for three days only, but a widow may mourn her husband four months and ten days.

This is due to Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) who said : "It is prohibited for a woman who believes in Allah and the day of judgment to mourn any dead person more than three days except her husband four months and ten days " (Al-Bukhari). This period is called the idda (Waiting period) which is prescribed by Allah in the Qur'an (2:234)

Wearing Black?

Wearing black at times of calamity is an erroneous custom that has no basis in Islam… When tragedy strikes, one should do what is prescribed in Islam, which is to say *"Innaa Lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon* (Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return)" [al-Baqarah 2:156 – interpretation of the meaning], and *"Allahumma i'jurni fi museebatini wakhluf li khayraan minhaa* (O Allah, reward me for my calamity and compensate me with something better)."

If he says that with faith and seeking reward, then Allah will reward him for that and compensate him with something better. But there is no basis for wearing a certain kind of clothes, such as wearing black etc. This is a wrong and blameworthy practice.

Funeral Prayer

Ruling of the Funeral Prayer

The funeral prayer is Fard Kifaayah. If some people do it then the rest are absolved of responsibility, but if all of them fail to do it then all are guilty of sin. Offered for children (after 4 months), men, women

Conditions

1.) **The deceased should be a Muslim**. A Muslim should **not** attend a non-Muslim's funeral, but visiting him when he is sick is permissible, because this may serve an interest, namely opening his heart to Islam.

And never (O Muhammad, Peace and Blessings be upon him) **pray (funeral prayer) for any of them (hypocrites) who dies, nor stand at his grave. Certainly, they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and died while they were *Fasiqun* (rebellious, - disobedient to Allah and His Messenger Peace and Blessings be upon him). [9:84]**

Concerning taking care of funeral arrangements for a family member, it was narrated in a saheeh hadeeth that Naajiyah ibn Ka'b narrated that 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "I said to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), 'Your old, misguided uncle has died (he was referring to his father Abu Taalib). Who will bury him?' He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said, 'Go and bury your father.' [I] said, 'I will not bury him, for he died as a mushrik.' He said, 'Go and bury him, then do not do anything until you come to me.' So I went and buried him, then I came to him with traces of dust and earth on me. He told me to wash myself, then he made du'aa' for me in words that were more precious to me than everything on earth."
***al-Silsilah al-Saheehah*, by al-Albaani, no. 161**

So it **is** allowed for the Muslim to take care of the burial of his non-Muslim relatives and it does not cancel out one's hatred of their shirk.

As we can see that 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) initially refused to bury his father for that very reason, as he said, "he died as a mushrik." He thought that if he buried him when this was the case, that this was included in the forbidden kind of friendship as referred to in the ayah (interpretation of the meaning):

"O you who believe! Take not as friends the people who incurred the Wrath of Allah" [al-Mumtahinah 60:13]

But, when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) repeated the command (to 'Ali) to bury his ('Ali's) father, he hastened to obey him and he gave up the notion that had initially occurred to him.

This is what obedience means: That a person gives up his opinion in response to the command of his Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

It seems that a son's burying his non-Muslim father or mother is the last act of good companionship that the son can do for his non-Muslim parent in this world. But after the burial, he cannot make du'a for him or pray for forgiveness for him, because of the unambiguous words of Allah (interpretation of the meaning):

"It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah's forgiveness for the Mushrikoon, even though they be of kin" [9:113]

2.) The body should be present, unless the deceased died in a land where there are no Muslims to pray janazah over him, then some Muslims may perform the janazah for him in another land.

3.) The deceased should be placed in front of the Imam, and the Imam should stand at the head of a man and the middle of a woman, as described in the saheeh ahaadeeth narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If there are a number of dead, men, women and children, the men should be placed closest to the imaam, then boys, then women, then girls. The woman's middle should be in line with the man's head, so that the Imam will be standing in the correct position in relation to all of them, as prescribed in Sharee'ah.

4.) The body should be washed

5.) He should not be a shaheed.

That is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not pray over the martyrs of Uhud (narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1347), and because the purpose behind the funeral prayer is to intercede for the deceased. The martyr receives expiation for everything (so he has no need of intercession), apart from debt; debt is not waived because of martyrdom, rather it remains owed by the deceased.

When the prayer is offered for a child, there should be no prayer for forgiveness, and it should not be said in the prayer "*Allahumma aghfir lahu* (O Allah forgive him)," because no sins were recorded for him. Rather prayers should be said for forgiveness and mercy for his parents. That is because of the report narrated by Abu

Dawood (3180) and al-Tirmidhi (1031) from al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The funeral prayer should be offered for him and prayers should be said for forgiveness and mercy for his parents." ***Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Ahkaam al-Janaa'iz, p. 73.***

Shaykh 'Abd al-Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "It is permissible to offer the funeral prayer for the deceased inside the graveyard just as it is permissible to offer the funeral prayer for him after he is buried, because it was proven that a woman used to clean the mosque and she died. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked about her and they said, 'She died.' He said, 'Why did you not tell me? Show me to her grave.' So they showed him and he offered the prayer for her, then he said, 'These graves are filled with darkness for their occupants, but Allah illuminates them by my prayer over them.'" (Narrated by Muslim, 956) **From *Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah*, 8/392**

How to Pray the Funeral Prayer

The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) explained how the funeral prayer is to be done. It is done as follows:

You say the first Takbeer ("*Allahu Akbar*"), then you seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytaan, then you say *Bismillah ir-Rahmaan ir-Raheem* and recite *al-Faatihah* followed by a short *soorah* or some aayahs. Then you say Takbeer and send blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as one does at the end of the prayer. Then you say a third Takbeer and make du'aa' for the deceased. The best is to say:

"*Allahumma ighfir lihaayina wa mayitina wa shaahidina wa ghaa'ibina wa sagheerina wa kabeerina wa dhakarina wa unthaana. Allahumma man ahyaytahu minna fa ahyihi 'ala'l-Islam wa man tawaffaytahu minna fa tawiffahu 'ala'l-eemaan. Allahumma ighfir lahu warhamhu wa 'aafihi wa a'fu 'anhu, wa akrim nuzulahu wa wassi' madkhalahu waghsilhu bi'l-maa' wa'l-thalj wa'l-barad, wa naqqihi min al-khataaya kama yunaqqa' al-thawb al-abyad min al-danas. Allahumma abdilhu daaran khayra min daarihi wa ahlan khayra min ahlihi. Allahumma adkhilhu al-jannah wa a'idhhu min 'adhaab il-qabri wa min 'adhaab il-naar wa afsah lahu fi qabrihi wa nawwir lahu fihi. Allahumma laa tahrimna ajrahu wa la tadillanaa ba'dahu*

(O Allah, forgive our living and our dead, those who are present among us and those who are absent, our young and our old, our males and our females. O Allah, whoever You keep alive, keep him alive in Islam, and whoever You cause to die, cause him to die with faith. O Allah, forgive him and have mercy on him, keep him safe and sound and forgive him, honour the place where he settles and make his entrance wide; wash him with water and snow and hail, and cleanse him of sin as a white garment is cleansed of dirt. O Allah, give him a house better than his house and a family better

than his family. O Allah, admit him to Paradise and protect him from the torment of the grave and the torment of Hell-fire; make his grave spacious and fill it with light. O Allah, do not deprive us of the reward and do not cause us to go astray after this)."

All of this was narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

If you make du'a with other words, this is permissible. For example, one could say, "Allahumma in kaana muhsinan fa zid fi ihsaanihi wa in kaana musee'an fa tajaawaz 'an sayi'aatihi. Allahumma ighfir lahu wa thabbit-hu bi'l-qawl il-thaabit (O Allah, if he was a doer of good, then increase his good deeds, and if he was a wrongdoer, then overlook his bad deeds. O Allah, forgive him and give him the strength to say the right thing)." Then you say a fourth Takbeer and pause for a little while, then you say one Tasleem to the right, saying "*Assalaamu 'alaykum wa rahmat-Allah*."

There is no Athaan, Iqamah, ruku or sujood in this prayer.

BURIAL OF THE DECEASED

The grave should be dug deep enough so that no odor will emerge from it and no scavengers may enter it.

The Sunnah is to put the deceased into the grave from the end, then he should be turned onto his right side in the grave, with his face facing towards the qiblah. The one who puts him into the *lahd* (niche in the grave) should say, "*Bismillaahi wa 'ala sunnat Rasool-Allahi* or *'ala millat Rasool-Allahi* (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) (In the name of Allah and according to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah or according to the religion of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)." (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, *al-Janaa'iz* 967; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood*, 836)

After the Burial

After the burial is complete, there are several things which are Sunnah:

To make the grave a little higher than the ground around the grave approximately a handspan, and not to make it level with the ground, so that it may be distinguished as a grave and respected, and not subjected to disrespect. There is nothing wrong with placing a marker, such as a rock or something similar, so that others of his family may be buried near him later on.

Water should be sprinkled on the grave so that the soil will settle and not fly around.

No one should stand by the grave telling the deceased that he will be questioned soon etc., as is the custom among some people. Rather people should stand at the grave and pray for the deceased to be made steadfast and for forgiveness for him. Those who are present should be told to do this, because of the hadeeth of 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: "When the deceased had been buried, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would stand by (the grave) and say: 'Pray for forgiveness for your brother and ask for him to be made steadfast, for even now is he being questioned.'" (Narrated by Abu Dawood, *al-Janaa'iz*, 2804; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood*, 2758).

Nothing of the Qur'an should be recited at the graveside, because this is bid'ah. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not do this, and neither did his noble Companions. It is haraam to build up graves or to plaster them or to write anything on them, because Jaabir said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade us to plaster graves with gypsum, to sit on them or to build anything over them." (Narrated by Muslim, *al-Janaa'iz*, 1610. According to Abu Dawood, "He forbade us to plaster graves with gypsum, to write on them or to step on them." (*al-Janaa'iz*, 3226. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in *Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood*, 2763)

A rock (or stone) for a marking the grave

It was narrated from Katheer ibn Zayd al-Madani that al-Muttalib said: When 'Uthmaan ibn Maz'oon died, his bier was brought out and he was buried, then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered a man to bring a rock but he was not able to carry it. So the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stood up and rolled up his sleeves. Katheer said: al-Muttalib said: the one who narrated that to me from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: it is as if I can see the whiteness of the arms of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he rolled up his sleeves. Then he carried it and placed it at the head (of the grave), and said, "From this I will recognize the grave of my brother, and I can bury those among my family who die near him." (Narrated by Abu Dawood, 3206)

The isnaad of this hadeeth was classed as hasan by al-Haafiz ibn Hajar in *al-Talkhees al-Habeer*, 2/133).

Ibn Qudaamah said: There is nothing wrong with marking a grave with a stone or a piece of wood. There is nothing wrong with a man marking a grave so that he will know where it is. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) marked the grave of 'Uthmaan ibn Maz'oon. **Al-Mughni, 2/191**

If there is no graveyard for the Muslims, then when a Muslim dies he **cannot** be buried in the kaafir graveyard. Rather a place should be sought for him in the desert, where he

should be buried and then the land leveled over him so that it will not be dug up. If it is possible to bring him to a city where there is a Muslim graveyard without going through too much trouble or expense, then that is preferable. With regard to washing a dead Muslim in a place where kaafirs are also washed, that is permissible, if it is too difficult to find another place. **Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas, 8/454**

Placing a branch or stick on the grave after burial?

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) passed by two graves and said: "They are being punished but they are not being punished for something that was difficult to avoid." Then he said, "One of them used to go about spreading malicious gossip, and the other used not to take precautions to avoid being contaminated with urine." Then he took a fresh branch, broke it in two and planted each piece on a grave. Then he said: "May their punishment be reduced so long as this does not dry out."

Some say that it is Sunnah to place a fresh branch, etc on the grave so that the punishment might be reduced. But this understanding is very far-fetched, and **it is not permissible for us to do that for several reasons.**

1.) We do not know that this man is being punished, unlike the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whom Allah told by means of Revelation about the situation of those two graves.

2.) If we do that, we are mistreating the deceased, because we are in fact thinking badly of him and assuming that he is being punished, when we do not know that. It may be that he is being blessed, or it may be that this deceased person is one of those whom Allah blessed with forgiveness before he died because of one of the many things that bring forgiveness, so he died having been forgiven by the Lord of all people, in which case he would not deserve to be punished.

3.) This understanding is contrary to the way of the righteous salaf. This action was not part of their way, and they were the most knowledgeable about the sharee'ah of Allah.

4.) Allah has shown us something that is better than that. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) finished burying someone he would stand over the grave and say, "Pray for forgiveness for your brother and ask that he be made steadfast, for even now is he being questioned."

Burial at night

It is permissible to bury the dead at night, because Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that “A man died whom the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to visit (during his illness). He died at night and they buried him at night, and when morning came, they informed him (the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said, ‘What kept you from telling me?’ They said, ‘It was night, and it was dark, and we did not like to disturb you.’ He went to his grave and prayed for him.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim)

The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) did not rebuke them for burying him at night; rather he rebuked his companions for not telling him about that until the morning. When they gave him their excuses, he accepted them.

Abu Dawood narrated that Jaabir said: “Some people saw a fire in the graveyard, so they went to it, and saw the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the graveyard, saying, ‘Hand me your companion.’ He was the one who used to raise his voice in dhikr.” This happened at night, as indicated by the words of Jaabir, “Some people saw a fire in the graveyard…”

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was buried at night. Imam Ahmad narrated that ‘Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “We did not know that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been buried until we heard the sound of the shovels at the end of the night.” Abu Bakr, ‘Uthmaan, ‘Aishah and Ibn Mas’ood were all buried at night.

The reports which indicate that it is makrooh to bury the dead at night are to be interpreted as referring to cases where burying a person at night may lead to the prayers for him not being offered properly, as was stated in the saheeh hadeeth, or his shrouding not being done properly, and it is easier for those who want to attend the funeral to do so during the day, and it is easier to bury him properly and to follow the Sunnah when placing the deceased in the lahd during the day. This is in cases where it is not essential to hasten to bury him. Otherwise we should hasten to bury him even if that is at night.
And Allah is the Source of strength. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.
Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas, 8/397

Condolences

It is prescribed in Islam to offer condolences to the family of the deceased. This should take the form of whatever is thought will bring them consolation, stem their grief and help them to be patient. Condolences should be offered in the manner reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) if one can remember that,

otherwise in whatever good words come easily to one which will achieve the same purpose and which do not go against Islam. It was narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "To Allah belongs that which He has taken and that which He gives, and with Him everything has an appointed end, so be patient and seek reward." *(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, al-Janaa'iz, 1204)*

Two things must be avoided:

- Gathering to offer condolences, even though the people do that.

- The family of the deceased preparing food to offer to those who come to offer condolences. The Sunnah is for the relatives and neighbors of the deceased to make food enough for the bereaved family.

Reward for Offering Funeral Prayer

Abu Hurairah narrates that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Whoever follows a funeral procession and offers the prayer for the deceased, will get one kerat of reward. And whoever follows it and remains with it until the body is buried, will get two kerats of reward, the least of which is equal in weight to 'Mount Uhud' or he said 'one of them is like Uhud.' The narrator is not certain as to the exact words used by the Prophet, peace be upon him. This is reported by the group.

Khabbab reported that he asked "O 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar! Did you hear what Abu Hurairah says? He says that he heard Allah's Messenger, saying. 'Whoever leaves his house to attend a funeral prayer, offers funeral prayer, and then follows the funeral procession until the body is buried will receive two kerats of reward, each of which is like the mountain of Uhud. And whoever offers the funeral prayer and then leaves for home (This proves that a person does not need permission of the family of the deceased to leave after attending the funeral) will get a reward like the mountain of Uhud" (Muslim)

Ibn 'Umar sent Khabbab to 'Aishah asking her about the statement of Abu Hurairah. She said, "Abu Hurairah has told the truth." When Ibn ' Umar was informed about this he said, "We have indeed lost many a kerat."

Visiting the graves

It is prescribed to visit graves in order to learn a lesson from that and to remember the Hereafter. That is subject to the condition that one does not say anything that will anger

the Lord, such as calling upon the one who is buried or seeking his help instead of Allah, or praising him and saying that he is for certain in Paradise, etc.

The purpose of visiting the graves is twofold:

1.) The visitor benefits from remembering death and the dead, remembering that their ultimate destiny will be either Paradise or the Hell-Fire. This is the primary purpose of the visit.

2.) The deceased also benefits and is treated kindly by the visitor greeting him with salaams, making du'a for him, praying for forgiveness for him. This applies only to Muslims. Among the du'a's that may be recited are:

"*Assalaamu 'alaykum ahl al-diyaar min al-Mu'mineen wa'l-Muslimeen, in sha Allah bikum laahiqoon, as'al Allaha lana wa lakum al-'aafiyah* (peace be upon you O people of the dwellings, believers and Muslims, In sha Allah we will join you, I ask Allah to keep us and you safe and sound)."

It is permissible to raise the hands when reciting this du'a, because of the hadeeth of 'Aishah who said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went out one night, and I sent Bareerah to follow him and see where he went. She said, 'He went towards Baqee' al-Gharqad [the graveyard in Madeenah], and he stood at the bottom of al-Baqee' and raised his hands, then he went away.' Bareerah came back to me and told me, and when morning came I asked him about it. I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, where did you go out to last night? He said, 'I was sent to the people of al-Baqee', to pray for them.'"

But you should not face the grave when making du'aa' for them; rather you should face the direction of the Ka'bah, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade prayer (salaah) facing graves, and du'a is the heart and soul of salaah, as is well known, and is subject to the same rulings.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Du'aa' is worship" then he recited the ayah (interpretation of the meaning): **"And your Lord said: "Invoke Me [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation)."** [Ghaafir 40:60]

You should not walk between the graves of the Muslims wearing your shoes.

It was narrated that 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'If I were to walk on hot coals or on a sword, or if I were to mend my shoes using my feet, that would be better for me than if I were to walk on the grave of a Muslim. And it makes no difference

to me if I were to relieve myself in the midst of the graves or in the middle of the market-place [i.e., both are equally bad].'" (Narrated by Ibn Maajah, 1567)
Mukhtasar Ahkaam al-Janaa'iz by al-Albaani

Women visiting graves

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is not permissible for them, because of the general meaning of the ahaadeeth which forbid women to visit graves and which curse them for doing so. The difference of opinion concerning women visiting the grave of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is well known, but if they refrain from doing so that is more on the safe side and more in accordance with the Sunnah, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not make any exception in the case of his grave or the grave of anyone else. Rather he forbade them in general terms, and cursed those women who do that. So we should follow the general meaning so long as there is no text that specifically exempts his grave, and there is no such text.
Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baaz, 17/419.

CONCLUSION

We should all think about our death on a daily basis, and reflect upon the fact that this day could in fact be our last. Awareness of death creates a gentle, supportive, and giving believer.

The Muslim that is conscious of his/her own death will constantly see the need to seek the forgiveness of their Lord, constantly increase their worship, and seek refuge with Him.

The Muslim who remembers death is more likely to be careful not to displease his Lord and quickly ask for forgiveness if he falls into sin. Repentance will become his daily practice since he remembers that death might come to him at any time, so he is taking precautions by being always repentant.

This remembrance of death will improve the quality of his prayer. If in your prayer, you you are conscious of the fact that this may be your last prayer, then you will truly humble yourself in this prayer. That's why the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) advised us that at the start of every prayer we should consider that, this particular prayer is our last prayer in this life. Repentance, Prayer, Humbleness, Self-Restraint, Patience, Charity, Fear of Allah's Punishment, and Hope of his Mercy are all immediate outcomes of the remembrance of death.

It was said that Imam Malik Ibn Anas saw the Angel of Death in his sleep, and the Imam asked him: "How much (time) do I have left to live?" The Angel pointed to his five fingers. Then the Imam asked him: "Does that mean 5 years, or 5 months, or 5 days ?". Before the Imam had a chance to get an answer back, he woke up.

The Imam went to someone who would interpret dreams. That man told him: "Imam Malik, when the Angel pointed to his five fingers he didn't mean 5 years or months or days, but the Angel meant that your question ' how much left for me to live' is among 5 matters that only Allah knows about, and he recited the following verse from the Qur'an:

"Verily, with Allah alone is the knowledge of the Hour. And HE sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs. And no soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." [Qur'an 31:34]

We ask Allah to take our souls while he is pleased with us.

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